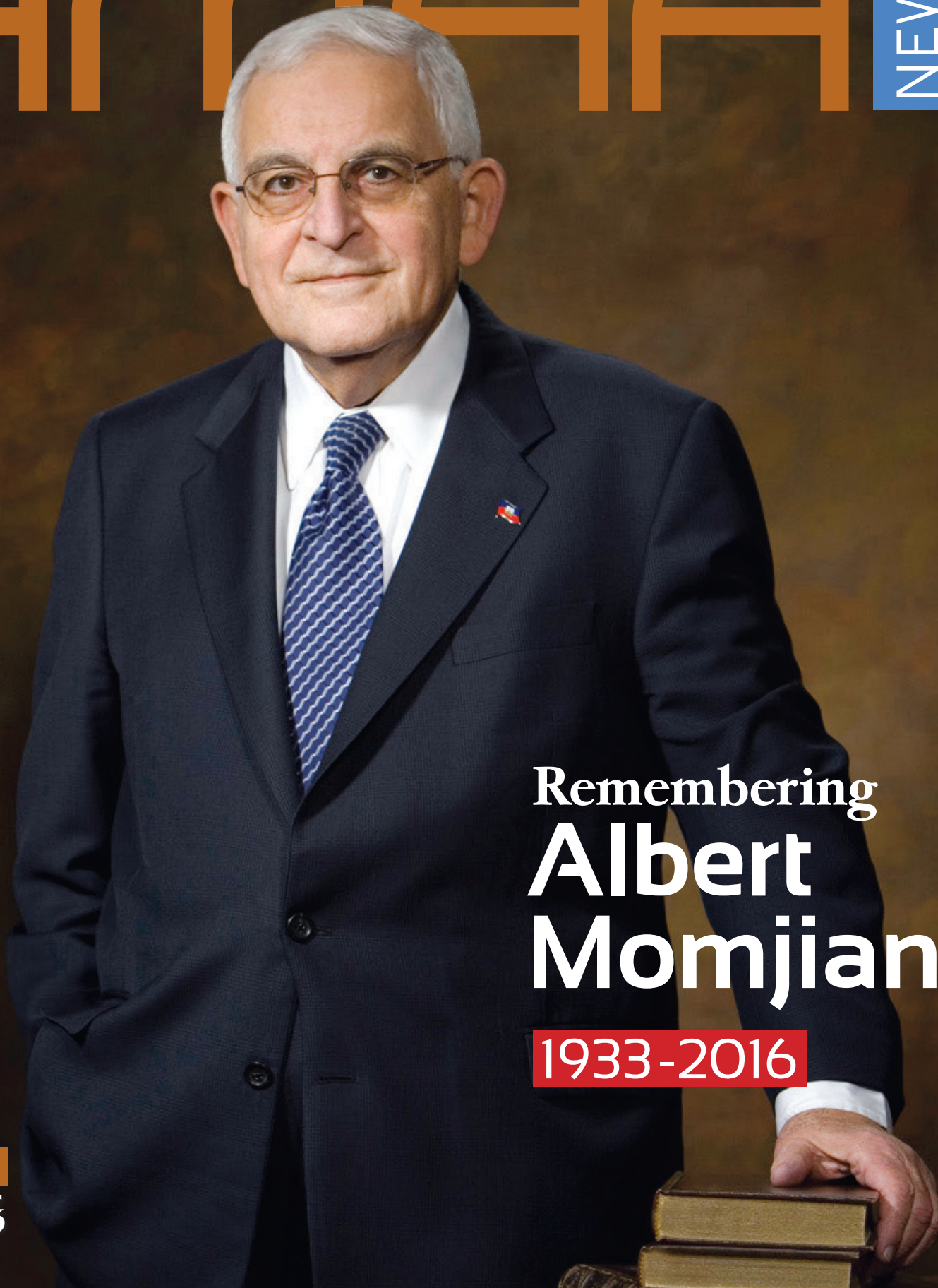


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ARMENIAN MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



AMMA

NEWS



Remembering
**Albert
Momjian**

1933-2016

L 4
October
2016



AMAA NEWS

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Dear Friends,

It is with deep sorrow that we share the sad news of the passing of Albert Momjian, Esq., former Board member and President of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), on July 11, 2016 after a brief illness.



For many years, Mr. Momjian served as a member of the AMAA Board of Directors, a member of various committees, as Board President from 1993-1997 and as Solicitor of the Association. His astute and wise leadership, dedicated and sacrificial service, focused and undivided attention, uncountable gratuitous professional services and boundless Christian love have all contributed to the recent history of the AMAA. The AMAA is what it is and where it is today because of his towering presence at the helm of our organization for so many years.

The AMAA Board of Directors and AMAA staff join together in extending our heartfelt sympathy to Mr. Momjian's wife, Esther, and to the entire Momjian family.

We dedicate this special issue of the AMAA News to the loving memory of Albert Momjian. He will be missed.

Zaven Khanjian
AMAA Executive Director/CEO

Albert Momjian, Esq.

1933-2016



ALBERT MOMJIAN, age 82, a nationally renowned family lawyer, died on Monday, July 11, 2016. Regarded as the Dean of the Pennsylvania family law bar, he practiced law for more than 50 years, retiring in December 2012 as a partner from Schnader Harrison Segal & Lewis, LLP, where he was Chair of the Family Law Department, one of the largest in the nation.

A major force in both the development and advancement of family law in Pennsylvania, he co-chaired the Committee to Consolidate Pennsylvania Family Laws and served as a consultant to the Pennsylvania House and Senate Judiciary Committees during passage of the 1980 Divorce Code. Over the course of his professional career, Albert represented many famous clients, including actor Will Smith, television and radio host Larry King, casting director Billy Hopkins, film director Lee Daniels, Phillies' relief pitcher Tug McGraw, and Flyers' owner Ed Snider. His high-profile cases were featured on *Primetime Live* and in *People*, *Time*, *Vanity Fair*, the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

The author of hundreds of articles on family law, Albert Momjian's landmark treatise, *Pennsylvania Family Law*, is frequently cited by Pennsylvania's appellate courts. He was annually named a Pennsylvania Super Lawyer (being ranked in the Top 10 of attorneys statewide for several years) and was listed in *The Best Lawyers in America* for family law for three decades. A Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers, Albert was the recipient of many honors, including the Cecil B. Moore Award from the Barristers' Association of Philadelphia, the Eric D. Turner Award from the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Family Law Section for Outstanding Service as a Teacher and Mentor,

the Judge Learned Hand Award from the American Jewish Committee, and the Columbia University Alumni Medal for Distinguished Service. In 2014, he was honored by the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Family Law Section with its first-ever Lifetime Achievement Award.

Albert was born in Atlantic City, New Jersey on July 27, 1933. His Armenian parents, Garabed and Johar Momjian, emigrated from Malatya, a city located on the banks of the Euphrates River in the Province of Kharpert, in the Ottoman Empire. Confectionery manufacturers during and after the Great Depression, the Momjian family operated the Atlantic Candy Company on Virginia Avenue. Albert graduated first in his class from Atlantic City High School in 1951, and in addition to winning several departmental honors, he received special recognition at his graduation for never missing a day of school beginning in the first grade.

Albert attended Columbia College and Columbia Law School on full scholarships, completing his undergraduate degree in three years. After graduating from law school, he joined the Pennsylvania National Guard. Eventually, he would serve as Major and Vice President of the First Regiment Infantry of the Pennsylvania National Guard. His first and only foray into politics was his election in 1975 to the Lower Moreland Township (Montgomery County) School Board, the first Democrat elected in the history of the township.

A passionate musician and music-lover, Albert played over a dozen musical instruments, from the bassoon, double bass and the banjo, to the violin and the recorder. A member of New Jersey's All-State Orchestra, as well as the Columbia University Orchestra, he played in a Dixieland band in Greenwich Village and other Manhattan venues while in college. One of his fondest joys in life was

singing hymns in church, especially at Christmastime. His love for music never diminished, playing jazz and blues harmonica for his family and friends until the time of his passing.

Albert was known and loved for his community involvement and philanthropy. He served as Honorary Consul to the Republic of Haiti for nearly four decades, coming to the aid of the country and its expatriates, especially following the devastating 2010 earthquake. As past President of the Philadelphia Consular Corps Association, Albert also served on the Board of the United Nations Association of Greater Philadelphia. He served as the first President of the Animal Law Committee of the Pennsylvania Bar Association, and he was a distinguished member of the Disciplinary Board of the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.

Albert represented the interests of countless Armenian organizations and individuals, for more than half a century, all on a pro bono basis. He served as President, Solicitor, and as Board member of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, and in those capacities visited Armenian communities in Armenia and the Middle East. He was former Chair of Haigazian University Board of Trustees and a long time Trustee of the Stephen Philibosian Foundation. Albert also served as Solicitor to the Armenian Assembly of America in Washington, D.C., and to the Armenian Sisters Academy in Radnor, Pennsylvania. He was a leader in raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for his beloved Armenia following the devastating earthquake of 1988, and he was a former Grand Commander of the Ardashad Lodge of the Knights of Vartan. And until recently, he and Esther faithfully attended worship services and Bible class at the



Albert and Esther Momjian.

Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church in Havertown, PA, where they were members, and where Al had played a significant personal and professional role in the church's life over the years.

Albert Momjian is survived by his wife, Esther. The couple celebrated their 57th wedding anniversary this past June. He is also survived by three adult children, Carol (married to Michael Hanamirian), Mark (married to Melineh Vartany) and Thomas (all lawyers), as well as five grandsons (David, Michael, Jr., Gregory, Maxwell, and Miles). Additionally, Albert is survived by his older brother, Set Momjian, a former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. □



L to R: Michael Hanamirian, Albert Momjian, Mark Momjian, Esther Momjian, Carol Momjian Hanamirian, Thomas Momjian, Melineh Momjian.

A Tribute to **Albert Momjian, Esq.**

Good morning,

We are gathered here this morning, in this House of God, to pay our last respects and to bid farewell to a man I have come to know through his faithful service to the Armenian Missionary Association of America for over half a century as President, Board member and pro bono Solicitor.

As I look closer to a life lived from today's perspective I realize that this farewell is not to an ordinary man. Al's dedication, generosity, intellect, love and energy served a wide range of organizations and a host of causes. It had neither ethnicity limits nor professional barriers. He soared in life like a superman, never alone, as he always carried others on his wings.

As a man with indelible integrity, Al was able to win the respect, confidence and trust of all those he worked with. With that invaluable virtue on hand and his skillful diplomacy there was no obstacle he wouldn't overcome.

Al was a man of God. In his address at the 75th Anniversary Banquet of the Armenian Missionary Association of America which coincided with his Presidency, talking about a changing world and the necessity of rethinking goals and objectives of the organization and his vision for the future, Al said "We are fortunate in having one constant throughout the past 75 years and for as long as the AMAA continues to exist. That constant is the Lord and our guiding star is service to God."

Our recent past, laid in laurels, was the future that Al envisioned, planned, carved and implemented and because of his marvels, the bar today is higher for us and makes our job joyously harder.

Al believed that the AMAA has been one of the best organizations in the world to help all Armenians throughout the world. Today, because of his immense contribution to that legacy, the AMAA continues to be one of the best. The AMAA is what it is and where it is because of Al's towering presence at the helm of the organization and at its service for so long.

It is often said that no one is indispensable. That might be true. But the fact is that it is extremely difficult to ever find the one who will fill his shoes. He will be missed.

We live in difficult times and a fast changing world. Demographics are in constant motion. Alert and concerned, we look to the future of our people and vow to be prepared for what it might hold for us. With a role model like Al we shall tirelessly aspire to be faithful to his legacy.

On behalf of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, our President Dr. Nazareth Darakjian, and my wife Sona, I would like to extend our deepest sympathy to Mrs. Esther Momjian, Carol, Mark, and current AMAA Board member and a true friend, Tom and all the grandchildren.

We praise God for Al's life. May he rest in peace.

Zaven Khanjian
AMAA Executive Director/CEO
Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church
Havertown, PA
July 16, 2016

ARMENIAN MISSIONARY



ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA
Founded 1918

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Albert Momjian, Esq. – A True Friend of the AMAA

On July 11, 2016 the Armenian Missionary Association of America lost a true friend and lifetime supporter in the person of Albert Momjian.

Al, as his friends called him, was an AMAA Board member for many years and, in spite of his very busy professional career, served as President of the AMAA from 1993-1997, always available and ready to take on responsibility. Al also served as AMAA Solicitor donating his time and professional expertise gratis whenever there was a need. He served on the Board of Haigazian University, again lending his legal expertise when necessary and revising the bylaws several times. He often traveled to the Near East and Armenia to visit the AMAA mission fields and to attend Board meetings of Haigazian University in Beirut.

I had the good fortune of serving as an AMAA Board member during those years when Al served as President, and I remember that every time the discussion got a little “hot” Al would take over and with his calm voice, searing logic and very persuasive words would restore calm to the meeting and guide the opinions of the members in the proper direction. Even after he stopped serving as President, he was consulted frequently whenever a serious issue arose that baffled us Board members.

The Psalmist says “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.” Al was truly a blessed man, and would certainly satisfy all of the above conditions that the Psalmist describes. He was a man of God and the law of the Lord was above all else in his mind and heart. Al was also blessed with a wonderful family and especially his beloved wife Esther who was his ever present support and solace. It is also not surprising that his two sons and daughter have followed his professional steps and that both Tom and Mark have served and continue to serve the AMAA in various capacities.

Once more to quote the Psalmist, “He is like a tree planted by streams of water, that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.” The description cannot get any more accurate than that. Al was the tree that never failed to bear fruit and was certainly prosperous in everything that he attempted.

The AMAA and its mission, past, present and future had a very special place in Al’s heart. The physical distance between Philadelphia and Paramus notwithstanding, Al was always on top of the issues and in charge. Al considered himself fortunate to have been elected President in 1993 when the AMAA was celebrating its 75th birthday. During the Banquet celebrating this occasion, Al presented his view of the future of the AMAA as follows: “The AMAA has had a triumphant past. I believe it can have a wonderful future. But it isn’t going to be wonderful at all unless we rededicate ourselves to the challenges which lie ahead and unless we formulate new ideas, new programs and new techniques...” As for what anchors the future of the AMAA to its past, he said: “As long as we keep in mind our guiding star is service to God. We are fortunate in having one constant throughout the past 75 years and for as long as the AMAA continues to exist. That constant is the Lord and as long as we keep that focus and interpret all that we do in terms of service to Him, we have the best objective that any organization can have.”

Serving the AMAA, serving humanity, serving God. This is what constituted the core and centerpiece of Al’s existence. I consider myself fortunate to have known him as a person, and the AMAA has certainly been fortunate to have him as supporter, counselor and President. May God grant us the same spirit of love, wisdom and sacrifice that He blessed Al with so that we may continue to walk the paths that Al forged. May his memory be a blessing to us all.

Nazareth E. Darakjian, MD
President, AMAA Board of Directors

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations...” Matt. 24:14
«Այս արքայութեան աւետարանը պիտի քարոզուի ամբողջ երկրագունդին մէջ իբր վկայութիւն բոլոր ազգերուն...» Մատթ. 24. 14



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... that they may be one (John 17:11) ... որպէսզի անոնք մէկ ըլլան (Յովհ. 17.11) ... afin qu'ils soient un (Jean 17:11)

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Albert Momjian: In Memoriam

The passing of Albert Momjian on July 11, 2016 was a great loss to the Armenian Evangelical community particularly, and generally to the Armenian people as well as to the American community at large. For many decades, Albert Momjian served in voluntary capacities, many Armenian and non-Armenian institutions and organizations with great competence and dedication. His community involvements are too many to recall, positively impacting organizations such as the Armenian Evangelical World Council (AEWC), the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), the Stephen Philiposian Foundation, the Armenian Assembly, Haigazian University, the government and people of Haiti, and many others.

Albert faithfully served the AEWC as its Treasurer for many years. Whether it was the Council's routine transactions and disbursements, helping to write its constitution and bylaws, securing permission for its non-profit status, or any legal matter, Albert's contributions to the AEWC were keenly felt and greatly appreciated by all its members.

On a personal note, I always enjoyed my friendship with Albert for about 50 years. I cherished his passion for service, his intelligence, his sense of humor, integrity and genuine friendliness that penetrated one's heart.

Albert was a man of sound judgment and a great heart. In him were combined two qualities that do not always meet: the wisdom of a diplomat and the spiritual insight of a man of God. He was a person larger than life. He distinguished himself as a prominent family lawyer and a dedicated servant of the Armenian people. His unique qualities, skills and honesty, enthusiasm and dynamism, and his unwavering commitment to the Armenian and non-Armenian organizations touched the hearts and minds of many people.

We cherish the indelible mark he has left on all the organizations he served. For his intrepid leadership, many lives have been enriched. We are better people for having known him and served with him. **That is why he will be greatly missed** by all who knew him.

Farewell to you Albert, my dear friend! Your continued presence in our hearts and minds will shine and live forever. We will always cherish your great love and devotion, and for the example you set before us.

May God bless your precious memory.

Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian
Executive Director



Armenian Evangelical Union of North America
Հիսիսային Ամերիկայի Հայ Աւետարանական Միութիւն

July 15, 2016

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Mark, Carol, Thomas and Families

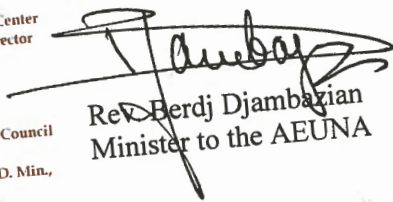
Dear Beloved in Christ,

On behalf of the Armenian Evangelical Union of North America, I wish to convey our deepest sympathy to you upon the passing away of your husband, Mr. Albert Momjian.

During his decades of service at the AMAA, Philibosian Foundation, Armenian Evangelical World Council, Haigazian University and many other philanthropic organizations in our community, Albert served the Lord in manifold leadership capacities with passion, wisdom and unreserved dedication. He was a valued member of the AEUNA family and we can all be justly proud of his contribution to the Armenian community in general and the Armenian Evangelical Church in particular. The fond memories of Albert will be a lasting inspiration for the future generations. He will be missed by all.

I extend my condolences to you and your family. I pray that the comforting power of the Holy Spirit may engulf your hearts and thoughts, knowing that those who rest in the Lord, and in particular fervent servants like Albert, do receive heaven's welcoming words: *'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'* (Matt. 25:23)

Yours prayerfully,


Rev. Berdj Djambazian
Minister to the AEUNA

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UNION OF
THE ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCHES
IN THE NEAR EAST



اتحاد
الكنائس الأرمنية الإنجيلية
في الشرق الأدنى

ՄԵՐՁՄԻՈՐ ԱՐԵՎԵԼԻ ՀԱՅ ԱՐԵՏԱՐԱՆԱԿԱՆ ԵԿԵՂԵՑԻՆԵՐՈՒ ՄԻՈՒԹԻՒՆ

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September 12, 2016
Beirut

Letter of Tribute

On behalf of the UAECNE Central Committee, I present to the late Albert Momjian family and the AMAA our sincere condolences as you and we remember and pay tribute to a life of professional service, Christian commitment, and humanitarian passion.

Indeed, Mr. Momjian's insightful leadership as president and Board member of the Armenian Missionary Association of America, his diligent involvement in the generous ministries of the Stephen Philibosian Foundation, his sensible presence in the AEWC meetings, and his long years of service to Haigazian University have been appreciated by all. Al Momjian's contributions were marked by wise and balanced counsel, a sense of humor and an unequivocal commitment to the church, the AMAA, and all that maintained the welfare of their ministries. He was a child with the children, a serious lawyer with professionals, and a loyal friend of all.

Al Momjian's visits to the UAECNE and its mission field in Lebanon and previously in Syria were deeply valued. Our memories of Al during the long years of his involvement on the Board of Trustees of Haigazian University are numerous, and his ability to draft documents and resolutions, give sound advice on legal and organizational matters have been significant.

May the Lord comfort the Momjian family, and may we all serve the Lord with the zeal and professionalism we all witnessed in Al Momjian's life.

To God be the Glory. Amen

Prayerfully,

Rev. Paul Haidostian, Ph.D.
Chair, UAECNE Central Committee

UNION DES EGLISES EVANGELIQUES ARMENIENNES DE FRANCE
30 Avenue de la Figone – (Beaumont) 13012 Marseille, France

Commission Synodale – Կեդրոնական Մարմին

August 22, 2016

To the Family of Albert Momjian and the Friends of the AMAA,

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, ... Blessed **are** the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." Revelation 14:13

On behalf of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of France, I would like to offer our sympathy and affection to brother Albert Momjian's family, the friends of the AMAA and the Armenian-American community. Being apart from a loved one, parent, friend, colleague, brother in Christ, is devastating and leaves a void that can't be humanly filled. Our brother Albert Momjian has been actively pursuing the work of God for many years, serving our people through the AMAA. He leaves a living testimony of love and dedication to his people.

Although our hearts are grieving and our eyes are tearful, God's comfort can fill us with peace and hope. The Bible calls God's children who died "blessed." They are alive in the Kingdom of God. "May they rest from their labors": not only are they blessed, but they can also get some rest in joy and peace. "Their works do follow them," they haven't been carried out in vain.

Dear family and dear friends of Albert, may God comfort you and fill your hearts with His peace. Through faith we have this living hope that one day, we'll be all together around Jesus in the Kingdom of God.

In Christ,

Rev. Hagop Tchoghandjian
Président



ՀԱՅԱՍՏԱՆՅԱՅՑ ԱՎԵՏԱՐԱՆԱԿԱՆ ԵԿԵՂԵՑԻ EVANGELICAL CHURCH OF ARMENIA

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ՀԱՆ ավագ հովիվ վեր. Մկրտիչ Մելքոնյան

July 14, 2016

Dear Momjian family:

As much as we all are saddened for the departure of our beloved AI, but in the same time we celebrate his life and faithful services today. We want to praise the almighty God for giving us someone like AI. May God bless his memory.

I have known AI for many years through the AMAA. His faithful and dedicated services had been an inspiration and a great example to all of us.

The Evangelical Church of Armenia has been blessed to have AI on the leadership of the AMAA who constantly loved and cared for Armenia and for God's ministry in Armenia through the AMAA.

On behalf of the ECA churches, pastors and the entire Evangelical Community in Armenia I would like to extend our condolences. May God comfort each and every family member with His comforting Holy Spirit.

In Christ's love,

Mgrdich Melkonian
ECA Senior Pastor



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СОЮЗ АРМЯНСКИХ ЕВАНГЕЛЬСКИХ ЦЕРКВЕЙ ЕВРАЗИИ
UNION OF THE ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCHES IN EURASIA

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Նախագահ • Президент • President

Albert Momjian – A Big Footprint, A Big Heart

The news of the passing of Albert Momjian, Esq. really touched me. I want to personally and on behalf of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches of Eurasia express to his family our sympathies and affections.

There are people who come and go in this world without leaving a large footprint. This was not the case of Albert Momjian who left his mark in many areas and in many organizations. In my case, I got to know him better when I served in Armenia beginning in 1994. It was during this time that Rev. Dr. Movses Janbazian served as the Executive Director and Albert Momjian had to be chosen for Armenia and for Eurasia (former Soviet Union countries). I remember the presence and the speech of Mr. Momjian in Yerevan in July 1996 during the 150th Anniversary celebrations of the Armenian Evangelical Church at the Aram Khachadourian Music Hall. He used the right words describing the circumstances and the vision of the AMAA.

Albert Momjian had a big heart. He knew how to encourage and appreciate what we were doing. He will be missed by all. We are delighted that he was able to pass the torch to his family members and to many others. He set a good example for us on how to serve.

The pastors and the members of Armenian Evangelical Churches of Eurasia praise God for this great man who knew how to remain humble.

Rev. Dr. René Leonian
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A Tribute to Albert Momjian

On behalf of the Haitian Coalition of Philadelphia, indeed on behalf of the Haitian community at large, and on my own personal behalf, I offer deepest condolences to the Momjian family. It is with a great deal of respect that I extend the Haitian community's most honorable salute to Albert Momjian as he takes leave of us for a well-deserved rest.

For 35 years, Albert dedicated time to the delivery of humanitarian and medical aid to Haiti, provided legal counsel and afforded material support to Philadelphia's substantial Haitian population. Since 1978, he served as Honorary Consul for the Republic of Haiti in Pennsylvania, ever-ready to address the myriad logistical needs for Haitians who arrived at his desk.

The Consul position became all the more visible after the unprecedented earthquake in January 2010. Albert labored tirelessly to reunite Haitian families in Pennsylvania to their family members in Haiti, to obtain passports or to offer guidance. Even after the immediate crises, Albert continued to serve families in need. As he expanded his generosity, it was humbling to see that his only abstraction was the pride and joy of his enthusiasm. In 2011, the Haitian Coalition of Philadelphia awarded the Honorary Haitian Award to Albert for his dedication and distinguished service as Honorary Consul to the Haitian Community of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

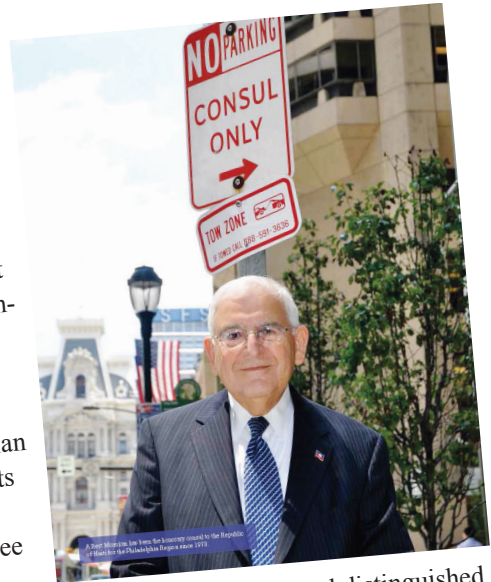
Among treasures, Albert was a rare and precious gem. As for me personally, I considered him a mentor or even more intimately, a father. In fact, whenever we would go to meetings, or go to different places together, he liberally went around telling people that I was his son. And then he would wait for the reaction. He relished satisfaction in the looks he would get. One of the people replied, "Oh, Albert, you devil, you!" And another time, someone else looked at me and then looked at him and said, "Well, at least he has your nose!"

In addition to sharing a lot of humor, Albert also portrayed a lot of humility. As Haitians grew to know and appreciate him, today they salute the transition of the gentle giant who took on their heaviest concerns. In fact, there was a time that Albert and I were at 30th Street train station in Philadelphia, on our way to New York to meet with the President of Haiti, René Préval. On the platform, among the awaiting passengers, were a group of three women. One of them gravitated toward Albert and said, "You are Mr. Momjian. Oh, it's so great to meet you; you are a very famous person!" Albert replied with a big smile, "Well, I think if you go down to the sports stadium, the hot dog there is very famous."

However humorous his humility, Albert's grand spirit moved mountains for the betterment of the Haitian people. His commitment was exemplary as to what it means to be a *servant for the human good*. And from where he now rests, I am sure that he will continue to guide and inform our lives. From where he rests, I am sure he will continue to extend his warmth to a beautiful family whom he loved dearly and who dearly admired him.

Among men, Albert rises among the great ones. Such is the case *not* because he has been lauded for impeccable character, about which much respect and reverence are due; *not* only because he has won numerous awards beyond his work in the Haitian community; *not* because he was an auspicious counsel and that the legal community was immeasurably impacted by his imprint, but because he was a sublime human being...who, using sublime simple deeds...responded to simple human needs. It behooves us all to take a moment to reflect on the essence and contributions of an Albert Momjian. In our current time, challenged by local and global turmoil along differing constituent lines, may we all dare to imitate him.

Dr. Michel M.A. François, President
Haitian Coalition of Philadelphia
Delivered at the Funeral Services for Albert Momjian
Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church
Havertown, Pennsylvania
July 16, 2016



Albert Momjian Eulogy

Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church: July 16, 2016

By Mark Momjian, Esq.

*The Lord is my light and my salvation. Whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life. Of whom shall I be afraid?
When evildoers assail me, uttering slanders against me,
My adversaries and foes, they shall stumble and fall.*

Albert Momjian loved Psalm 27.

Indeed, the Psalms—that collection of songs written under the direction of the Holy Spirit—was our Dad's favorite book of the Bible.

The word "Psalm" means *praise*. And Dad loved giving praise to God and his Church.

As a child growing up in Atlantic City, NJ during the Great Depression, Dad faithfully attended the castle-inspired Chelsea Baptist Church. Built in 1911, the Church is adorned on its rooftop with a white sign with five red-lettered words that shout: "CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS." Dad never skipped Sunday school or worship service. Not surprising for a student who never missed a day of school from the first grade! He knew all the Books of the Bible by heart, and to the delight of his children, he would recite them in order, from Genesis to Revelation, with delirious speed.

But when it came to the church service, it was the singing of hymns that gave Dad the greatest joy. A hymn, of course, is a song of praise to God. And no matter where you sat in church, whether it was the first or the last pew, everyone could hear Albert's sonorous baritone. "Onward Christian Soldiers," "Christ the Lord Has Risen Today," "Holy, Holy, Holy," and "How Great Thou Art." These and other hymns stirred Dad's soul.

If Dad had not been a lawyer, he would have been a musician. He listened to music every day. And he passed on his love of music to his children and grandchildren. Incredibly, Albert played over a dozen instruments, from the banjo to the bassoon. He was a member of the New Jersey All-State Orchestra and the Columbia University Orchestra, and while in college, he played Double Bass in a Dixieland band. Just imagine Albert wearing a straw skimmer with a Columbia-blue ribbon and a red-striped vest, playing under the Washington Square Arch in Greenwich Village.

Dad delighted telling everyone how he would trick New York City taxi drivers, by hiding his Double Bass around a street corner, and when the cab stopped, he would open all the doors and the trunk, and then make a mad dash to retrieve his huge fiddle before the driver could change his mind.

Music stopped Dad in his tracks at times. He had a Blaupunkt radio with shortwave capability in his car, and he loved listening to Irish folk ballads, Greek Bouzouki music, and German Oom-Pah bands. If he heard the great concert organist E. Power Biggs on the radio, he would pull the car off the side of the road. If the Saint-Saens' Organ Symphony aired, he would shout: "Mozart was right! The organ is the king of instruments!"



Albert Momjian with his mother, Johar Momjian.

Dad loved hearing the trumpet played in church. Our family wants to thank Cousin Matthew for his trumpet-playing this morning. Your Uncle Albert associated the trumpet with royalty and on those occasions in church when there was a marriage of organ and trumpet, Dad's back would straighten, his eyes would bulge, and he would mouth the word "Wow!" And our family thanks Jeff Chapman for his beautiful singing this morning. Our Dad is in heaven smiling, in awe of your voice, a true gift from God.

Dad loved the bassoon so much, that if he heard the Telemann or Von Weber concertos, he would challenge us, "Name a more expressive instrument than the bassoon!" Of course, for him, the question was entirely rhetorical. He loved quoting Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*: "The Wedding-Guest here beat his breast/ For he heard the loud bassoon."

Over the years, Dad would say, "What instrument can make you cry listening to its upper register, and make you laugh listening to its lower register?" It was the bassoon's expansive emotional range that appealed to him. His signature warm-up was "The Arkansas Traveler," and every time we heard it, it made us giggle. It was like Art Carney playing "Suwannee River" on the piano in that hilarious episode of "The Honeymooners." One time, Dad heard a version of

"The Arkansas Traveler" by Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Boys, and he clapped his hands, slapped his thighs, and poked us in our tummies. He did that a lot.

There is a wonderful Yiddish word, "Nachas," which means joy and pride. Dad and Mom derived lots of "Nachas" from watching their children and grandchildren play in the marching band, the concert band, the symphonic orchestra, the chamber ensemble, the jazz ensemble, and so many choral concerts and musical theatre productions. And they went to all of them.

When I started practicing law, some of Dad's clients asked me how he managed to make time for his children when we were growing up. After all, he rose before 5:00 am every morning, including weekends, and he worked harder than any lawyer around.

But the reality to his children was so very different. Mom and Dad did everything with us. Their children were the world to them. Dad took me camping on weekends with Boy Scout Troop 432 "The Roadrunners"; my parents went to every football game to see my twin sister lead the marching band as Drum Majorette, twirling her fire baton; they went to every little league game to watch my brother Thomas play baseball, and, oh, the joy Dad got from driving with Tom up the Garden State Parkway to Paramus, to attend AMAA Board meetings together.

Going to see the Cardinals play the Phillies, first at Connie Mac, then at Veterans Stadium, was pure happiness, win or lose. Dad looked at that Cardinal posing on a baseball bat on the front of the uniform, and he couldn't resist asking, "Have you ever seen a more majestic bird?" Again, purely rhetorical, but boy, did Dad love his Redbirds. His favorite player was the Hall of Famer Stan Musial.

Dad loved the humility of Stan the Man, but he also shared with him one of his life's greatest joys: playing the harmonica. Dad played blues and bluegrass on the harmonica with incredible gusto. His Hohner Chomonica 280/64, the same instrument played by Stevie Wonder, was his baby. Even toward the end of his life, nothing impaired Dad's ability to play the harmonica, and everyone loved asking him to play Christmas carols, or "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." It was as if God gave him this amazing gift until the very end of his life, so that Dad's humanity would never fail to shine through.

When the Momjian children went off to college, the support of our parents never wavered. My sister was a cheerleader, I played with the Orchestra and the Gilbert and Sullivan Society, and Tom played in the concert band. And our parents were always there, positively happy that they could share our love of performance.

And this tradition continued when it came to their grandchildren. David would perform solos in Rachmaninoff's All-Night Vigil and the Verdi Requiem; Michael would serve as the principal French horn player for his college orchestra; Gregory would play Double Bass at Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall; Maxwell's college football team would go undefeated in his freshman year, nationally ranked in Division III. Dad said that no college football player in the country excelled at oboe like Maxwell. Imagine—an offensive lineman who plays the oboe! Dad loved that combination. And, finally, Miles, the youngest of the five grandsons, serves as his high school's principal trombonist. "Nachas," indeed.

If Dad were not a lawyer or a musician, what would he be? That's actually quite simple. He would have been a veterinarian or a zookeeper. Many here at church know about Dad's devotion to animals. Yes, he was pretty fanatical about the animal world. If



Albert and Esther Momjian.

you loved pets like he did, Dad instantly connected to you. If you didn't, well, let's just say that Dad would tell you that you were "confused." He had a simple test, really. Just stare into the eyes of any animal, dog or cat, horse or chimp. If you concentrated your stare, you would see why these creatures were God's handiwork.

Animals were transcendent creatures, Dad would say. They are the most giving creatures on Earth, and if you were inhumane to them, Dad would say you were inhumane in life. For their loyalty was unbending; their love unconditional. Dad was the first Chair of the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Animal Law Committee. He fought for tougher enforcement of animal cruelty laws, and for the abolition of puppy mills in Pennsylvania. Nothing in the law gave him greater pleasure than helping clients who loved God's creatures like he did. My dear Cousin Pam Derderian is Dad's soul mate when it comes to pets, Armenian versions of Dr. Doolittle. They communicate to dogs using a special, God-given language, and these furry and fuzzy creatures respond, as if they were one species.

Many at church today are congregants of Armenian Martyrs' or they are affiliated with the many Armenian organizations that our Dad tirelessly supported or served. Dad's Armenian roots were so very important to him. He was a true Knight of Vartan. He was very proud that his children and grandchildren were carrying on the tradition of helping others. The Armenian Homeland was a very special source of love for Dad, and whether it was through the Armenian Missionary Association of America, or the Stephen Philibosian Foundation, or the many other Armenian fraternal and charitable organizations, Dad was a true patriot, to America, to Armenia, to his Alma Mater, to his Church, and most of all, to his family.

On behalf of the entire Momjian family, and most especially on behalf of our Mother, we want to thank everyone for remembering our Dad today. Our cousins flew in from Jerusalem to be here, Uncle Tsolag, Aunt Allegra, and Cousin Alberto, thank you for the joy you bestowed on Dad. Our parents always delighted to be in the Holy Land, basking in your warmth and hospitality.

So many others came from great distances, like our dear family friends, beautiful Joe and Joyce Stein, who travelled from California, and our lovely cousin Monique, who came down from Boston and who has always been a great source of happiness and joy, along with her generous husband Paul and their angelic daughters.

Carol, Thomas and I want to thank our Cousins Bruce and Christopher Momjian, and their devoted spouses, Christine and Gail, and their amazing children, and to wonderful Aunt Wilma, and to our beautiful Aunt Seza, for all the love and comfort they gave to Dad, decade after decade. We extend thanks, too, to our Cousin Arthur and his incredible wife Lucy and their two talented daughters for their continued love and friendship.

Aunt Joan and Uncle Set, you played vital roles in Dad's life. Dad would boast that he and Uncle Set had only one fight in their entire lives, something over a bent bicycle rim, but then Dad would quickly add that the fight lasted all of one minute. That's how close they were. When they were together, it was easy to witness the magic. They completed each other's sentences, all with a lot of laughter. Two devoted brothers, who slept in the same bed in the 1930s, and who grew up knowing the meaning of humility and the mission to help others less fortunate.

My siblings and I want to single out Carol's devoted husband Michael. Big Michael was Dad's son, true and through. He respected Dad like no one else, treating him with such dignity and love, making him laugh, and surrounding him with happiness, at the grill, in the car, at the ball field, and with the dogs.

I also want to thank my wonderful wife Mel for all she's done to make Dad so happy and content. Dad lit up like a candle when he saw you at the office, always running to give you the biggest hug imaginable, for you, too, were a daughter to him.

To our brother Tom, no one spent more time with Dad in these difficult final years, but without you, without the constant banter, Dad's life would not be the same. Yes, you and Dad were awful card players, and worse, you were both bad at cheating at cards, but what a team you two made. The joy you had together rooting for the Eagles, down the shore, scratching Dad's back. Those memories will sustain us always.

Carol, you brought sunshine into Dad's life. I can still hear you laughing at Dad tickling you. Thank you for those wonderful Christmas Eve dinners, Carol. Dad loved Christmas, he loved



Albert Momjian with his grandson David Momjian.

playing Santa Claus, and he loved pouring the sparkling apple cider. You were pure joy and love to Dad, and I know his love for you was boundless.

Lastly, to our Mom, who was with Dad for 60 years, 57 of them as his devoted wife. Not too shabby for the spouse of a divorce lawyer. Mom and Dad played each other at backgammon over a thousand times, and believe me, she won half the games, never giving him an inch. You were a perfect couple; you balanced each other in so many ways. You supported everything that Dad did, and what he accomplished in his professional life and in the community would never have occurred without your steadfast love. The playfulness that you had for each other is seared into the memories of your children and grandchildren. Building sandcastles on the beach, grilling shish kebobs, strolling on the Boardwalk, playing with Maggie, your devoted Airedale terrier ... these and so many memories will sustain you and our family forever.

Thanks, again, to everyone here to honor Albert Momjian, devoted husband, loving father, and proud grandparent. We miss you terribly Dad, but you have left a special and enduring mark on all of us. □



Albert and Set Momjian.



Set and Albert Momjian.

Message at Albert Momjian's Memorial Service

By **Rev. L. Nishan Bakalian**, Pastor, Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church, Havertown, PA

What tumultuous times we live in, and what a tumultuous week this has been! A sudden upset in England's government; a sadistic attack in France; incessant bombing of civilians in a war nobody cares about any more in Aleppo; a coup d'état – or is it? – in Turkey; and more... And if all that weren't enough, this deep, personal sorrow in our dear Momjian family's and in our church family's life, with Albert's death this past Monday. It's hard to believe this has all taken place within a week. The world "out there," and the near, close-by world we inhabit, all these worlds seem out of control. We wonder what could possibly happen next, as things spin wildly in every which way. The balance of life is gone. And if we trust in God, even there it seems that it's also out of His control.

These are very human feelings. So, in the midst of these feelings of bewilderment, a simple word comes to us from the Bible, from prophet Isaiah. He lived in tumultuous times, too, with national upheaval a constant in the lives of God's people. Deportation and dispossession were the daily bread they ate. All of the distressing things that we feel, they felt, too. So the word of the Lord had to come to them who were doubting and despondent, wondering where God had gone. Isaiah said, "Haven't you heard? Don't you remember his words? Have you not understood how our Lord operates in this world? Do you not remember that He is victorious: The Lord of history?"

Yes, God is a victorious God, and trusting your present and future to Him is the wisest course of action anyone could take. But since God does not have a website, a newsfeed, a Twitter account, a blog, or any other of the anxiety providers we imbibe moment by moment, we may miss how God intervenes in our history, and how He guides and oversees His beloved children. We hear the loud, brash voices from the left and from the right, from far and near, and declare that they, not God, determine the direction of history. We conclude that the manufacturers of weapons and the exporters of unrest are the ones controlling man's destiny.

It is at such times, when such thoughts bombard us, that we need to hear Isaiah speaking:

- ²¹ Do you not know? Do you not hear?
Has it not been told you from the beginning?
Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth?
- ²² It is he who sits above the circle of the earth,
and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers;
who stretches out the heavens like a curtain,
and spreads them like a tent to dwell in;
- ²³ who brings princes to nothing,
and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness.
- ²⁴ Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown,
scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth,
when he blows on them, and they wither,
and the tempest carries them off like stubble.

Despite the pain of the loss of a beloved husband, father, grandfather and friend, despite the tragedies that are dividing communities in this country and the tumult that threatens to engulf

the world in its flames, God is still sovereign, His eye is on this world and on us, and His hand is upon us.

We need Isaiah's reminder: "Do you not know?" because no matter how much we may have experienced the guiding hand of God in our lives in the past, we don't remember very well. We only see the present pain, the present sorrow, and rather than recalling God's works, we grow more embittered, doubting the one who loved us and laid down His life for us, who gave us a sure and certain hope through His death on the cross: Jesus Christ.

"Yes, yes," you may say, "we know that we have this promise of eternal life, but that's for the future. What we are suffering is in the present. We suffer the loss of loved ones. We suffer as a people, like the Armenian people who suffer not only from the witless, ignorant comments of politicians who deny the Genocide we endured, but also suffer the unprovoked attacks on our people in the present day, in Nagorno-Karabagh or Nor Kyugh." Again, we turn to the prophet Isaiah, who continues:

- ²⁷ Why do you say, O Jacob,
and speak, O Israel,
"My way is hidden from the Lord,
and my right is disregarded by my God?"
- ²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard?
The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.
He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.
- ²⁹ He gives power to the faint,
and to him who has no might he increases strength.
- ³⁰ Even youths shall faint and be weary,
and young men shall fall exhausted;
- ³¹ but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.

God reminds us of His sustaining power, given to those who trust in Him. He who has conquered sin and death – our sin and our death – the Lord Jesus Christ, will grant us the renewed strength we need to run, or to walk, or perhaps even to fly. Though we endure suffering or sorrow now, our hope is in Him. He is at work in us, generating strength to face each trial with grace.

And so, dear friends, dear Momjian family, though the loss of your beloved Albert may seem like a blow from which you will never recover, do not forget the sustaining power the Lord promises to those who trust in Him. You may not notice His sovereign will or His renewing Spirit at work in your lives at any given moment today, but know that God is there. And as you reflect on these times in the months and years to come, you will know that God has ever been your help and guide. He is leading you right now, not only as the God of history, but also as your Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. □

(based on Marvin Hein, *Like a Shock of Wheat*, ch. 6) – 16 July 2016

Soaring Upward on the Wings of AMAA's Future

Editor's note: The following is the message delivered by former President of the AMAA Albert Momjian, Esq., at the Association's 75th Anniversary Banquet held on October 15, 1994.

It's an honor for me to address the members and friends of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) in my capacity as its President, an organization which I have served for many years. I am particularly pleased to be the Association's President during the celebration of the 75th Anniversary. Serving as President over these past months, I have seen the AMAA in a much different light, and I am happy to report that my impressions of our Association are even brighter than what I had ever envisioned them to be.

In planning for the future of the AMAA, a good question to ask is, "How much does one lean on historic past?" There has been much spoken and written about the past and future and the relationship between the two.

Going back hundreds of years, a statesman once said, "You can never plan the future by the past." On the other hand, Patrick Henry, the American patriot said, "I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I have no way of judging the future but by the past." Still another historian has written, "Lend me the stone strength of the past and I will lend you the wings of the future."

I don't know whether it really is important to rely on the past in planning for the future. Whether we have eyes in the front of our head and in the back of our head, at the same time, isn't the issue. The reality is that whether we rely on the past or not, it is essential that the AMAA plan for its future if the glorious past of the last 75 years is to be repeated in the next 75 years.

John Galsworthy in a work entitled "Swan Song" said, "If you don't think about the future, you can't have one." Charles Kettering remarked, "We should all be concerned about the future because we'll have to spend the rest of our lives there." Or we can be very pragmatic about the entire process by considering the following quotation, "The future is something which everyone reaches at the rate of sixty minutes an hour, whatever he does or whoever he is."

The AMAA has had a triumphant past. I believe it can have a wonderful future. But it isn't going to be wonderful at all unless we rededicate ourselves to the challenges which lie ahead and unless we formulate new ideas, new programs and new techniques to respond to the unique challenges of the society in which we live today and the new challenges that will develop week by week, month by month, and year by year, over the next 75 years. This evening, I would like to share with you some of the specific ideas I have regarding future plans for the AMAA which may give you an idea of how I react to the obligation we all have to alter our ways to adjust to what lies ahead as we march into the 21st century and beyond.

First of all, I am committed to the idea that planning is not the job of one person, be it the President, Executive Director or anyone else. The best way to plan for the future is to assemble as many minds as possible in order to discuss new approaches to the work of the AMAA and to formulate specific policies that will carry out the new ideas of the future. With that in mind, I will propose to the AMAA that we adopt the idea of a retreat at

least once every five years when a representative cross-section of our membership will gather together in a retreat setting to discuss, philosophically and practically, ideas for regenerating our efforts, goals and objectives. We are unable to bring together those ideas at regular Board meetings or meetings of the Executive Committee. Our crowded agendas do not give us sufficient time to discuss the changing patterns of our work and what we should do to address them. I would like to have our first retreat in 1995 and hope that the President of the organization at that time will adopt this idea. The retreat would be at a location away from the AMAA offices. It would take place during a weekend. We would have specific workshops and possibly a keynote speaker to set the tone for our discussion and deliberations.

Secondly, I believe it is vital for the AMAA to train leaders for its work in the future, and that includes new and young leadership for the Association in the years ahead. We have a wonderful dedicated and loyal group of persons who have served the AMAA for decades. I don't think that my pocket calendar could add up all of the years of services given by this faithful group. Because it is so easy to do, we tap the same people, perhaps too frequently, in leadership positions of the AMAA. That's good and enables us to draw on the extensive experience of those dedicated persons who have served the AMAA for many years. However, we have to recognize that tapping the same pool of leadership, year after year, without developing new and young leadership, could develop a vacuum in leadership as we begin the 21st century. We need to plan now in developing our leaders of the future. Perhaps the AMAA should consider an intern program such as other organizations have to introduce the youth of our churches to the mission work of our Association. While drawing



on their talents and energies, we can cultivate their interest to the work of the AMAA and begin to develop new effective leadership for the years ahead. It's difficult to realize how important the work of the AMAA really is until you are in the middle of the work of the AMAA at its Paramus offices or elsewhere. I think we have a much better chance of touching the hearts and minds of our youth who in ten or twenty years will become the directors, officers and staff of our Association.

A third vision I have is something passed on to me by Reverend Movses Janbazian. In the next 75 years, and because of our substantially broadened base of international mission service, we should attempt to internationalize our Board of Directors so that even though we are known as the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), we have a Board consisting of persons throughout the world who can deliberate and make policy decisions affecting the work of the AMAA not only in this country but abroad where the challenge and need are the greatest. If we serve the international community, as we certainly are doing, it seems appropriate to add international representatives to the AMAA Board. We can surely use the input of qualified leaders outside of the United States to make our work even more effective than it is now.

A fourth avenue of inquiry for the future is re-evaluating the administrative functions of the AMAA. We can be proud of how much work we get from our loyal and dedicated staff in terms of dollar expense compared to the income the AMAA receives and distributes. It is remarkable how little we spend per dollar we receive in terms of administration. But we have to realize that our budget is greater, our needs and demands are multiplying with a degree of dizziness and we have to think of new and efficient procedures to administer the overwhelming workload that our staff already has. The problem is not solved simply by getting a new computer or higher tech word-processing equipment. I don't believe that we can meet the multiplying demands of the future without some overhead of the administrative functions of our office. We want to assure ourselves that we can deliver the good we do at a minimum of expense and at a level that will create the maximum efficiency and serve as many people as possible.

Finally, I think it is vital that we reassess our objectives and goals in all of our mission fields and especially in the Middle East where we have served so well during these past 75 years and in the new and extremely important field of service in the new Republic of Armenia. It should not be "business as usual" because of the success of the past 75 years. Demographics have changed. Political situations have changed enormously. Our mission field has spread to other parts of the world. We know what the objectives and purposes of the AMAA were and have been over these past 75 years. They are noted in our Constitution and Bylaws. This may be the time to rethink our goals and objectives as long as we keep in mind that our guiding star is service to God. We are fortunate in having one constant throughout the past 75 years and for as long as the AMAA continues to exist. That constant is the Lord and as long as we keep that focus and interpret all that we do in terms of service to Him, we have the best objective that any organization can have although the implementation of that objective always has to be evaluated with adjustments dictated by the future.

These are just some of my personal ideas in planning for the future. I would hope that if the Association adopts my idea of a



Albert Momjian (second from left) with former Executive Directors of the AMAA, cutting AMAA's 75th Anniversary Cake at a banquet held at the Armenian Martyrs' Congregational Church of Havertown, PA. L to R: Rev. Jirair Sogomian, Pastor of the Church at the time, Albert Momjian, Rev. Dr. Movses Janbazian, and Rev. Dr. Giragos Chopourian.

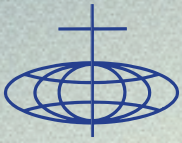
retreat every five years, we can get the input of all those who respect the work that we have been doing and formulate better ideas, better plans and better work procedures to accomplish all that we hope to accomplish in the next 75 years.

I wish it were possible for me to have a crystal ball that would put me in a position to describe to you what the AMAA will look like in 75 years. Obviously, that's not possible nor do I think it is necessary. I can give you my honest thought that we have had a wonderful past, we know that the future will be challenging in a world of still greater need; and the AMAA remains as one of the best organizations in the world to help all Armenians throughout the world. In meeting tomorrow's challenges, we can benefit from past experience and success but we certainly cannot rest on our laurels.

Success with an organization such as the AMAA isn't accomplished easily. Whether we realize it or not, doing good work is really a hard job. And you can't expect good things to happen in the future by simply waiting for the future to arrive and not being prepared to deal with all of its challenges. Complacency can be a problem with successful people and successful organizations. Other well-known organizations have closed their doors because of lack of planning and leadership.

The worldwide Armenian community needs the AMAA and we cannot allow this great institution to suffer because no one has planned its future. We need your help and your prayers as we close the door on our first 75 years and open new ones in the next 75.

At the outset of my remarks, I mentioned that if you do not think about the future, you cannot have one. Moreover, we all have to be concerned about the future because we'll have to spend the rest of our lives there and if not us, our children, and grandchildren. Pray for God's blessing on the AMAA as we lean on the strength of our wonderful past and soar upward on the wings of the future. □



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Albert and Esther Momjian with their grandchildren. L to R: Gregory Momjian, David Momjian, Albert and Esther Momjian, Michael Hanamirian, Jr., Maxwell Hanamirian and Miles Hanamirian.